



SOUTHEAST IDAHO

BANNOCK, BEAR LAKE, BINGHAM, CARIBOU, FRANKLIN, ONEIDA, & POWER COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

In September 2003, the Pocatello Metropolitan Statistical Area's (MSA) seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell three-tenths of a percentage point to 5.2 percent from the August 2003 revised rate of 5.5 percent. The return of Idaho State University students to the area for school and improved economic conditions, which prompted individuals not previously in the labor force to seek jobs, drove the *Civilian Labor Force* numbers up by 1,530 to 41,560 in September. The number of individuals unemployed dropped by 40 to 2,180 and contributed to the unemployment rate reduction.

Improved economic conditions in 2003 over 2002 drove the MSA's unemployment rate down six-tenths of a percentage point from the September 2002 rate of 5.8 percent.

The Pocatello MSA's September 2003 unemployment rate was below the state and U.S. unemployment rates at 5.5 percent and 6.1 percent, respectively.

The addition of 2,020 *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* in September 2003 over August 2003 was driven by education as the new school year started. *Government Education* added 1,630 jobs: 1,100 in *State Education* (Idaho State University) and 530 in *Local Education* (local school districts). Other notable increases occurred in *Leisure and Hospitality* (200) and *Government Administration* (180). Eighty additional jobs in *Accommodations* and 120 jobs in *Food Services & Drinking Places* were likely the result of increased activity over the Labor Day Holiday and the return of Idaho State University students to the area. Especially nice weather during September required the continuation of parks and recreation services and street maintenance projects, which contributed to the increases.

Year-over-year, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 950. Gains occurred in the *Service-Providing Industries* (990) while the *Goods-Producing Industries* lost 40

Southeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Pocatello City MSA (Bannock County)

	Sept 2003*	Aug 2003	Sept 2002	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	41,560	40,030	40,210	3.8	3.4
Unemployment	2,180	2,220	2,330	-1.8	-6.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.2	5.5	5.8		
Total Employment	39,380	37,810	37,880	4.2	4.0
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	41,050	39,310	40,040	4.4	2.5
Unemployment	1,900	2,130	2,050	-10.8	-7.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.6	5.4	5.1		
Total Employment	39,150	37,180	37,990	5.3	3.1
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	34,220	32,200	33,270	6.3	2.9
<i>Goods-Producing Industries</i>	4,360	4,380	4,400	-0.5	-0.9
Natural Resources & Mining	10	10	10	0.0	0.0
Construction	1,820	1,820	1,750	0.0	4.0
Manufacturing	2,530	2,550	2,640	-0.8	-4.2
Food Manufacturing	450	470	460	-4.3	-2.2
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	110	110	120	0.0	-8.3
Machinery Manufacturing	30	30	40	0.0	-25.0
Other Manufacturing	1,940	1,940	2,020	0.0	-4.0
<i>Service-Providing Industries</i>	29,860	27,820	28,870	7.3	3.4
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	6,640	6,650	6,660	-0.2	-0.3
Wholesale Trade	990	980	1,050	1.0	-5.7
Retail Trade	4,380	4,410	4,350	-0.7	0.7
Utilities	50	50	50	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	1,220	1,210	1,210	0.8	0.8
Information	690	690	690	0.0	0.0
Financial Activities	1,760	1,780	1,800	-1.1	-2.2
Professional & Business Services	3,570	3,420	3,220	4.4	10.9
Educational & Health Services	2,820	2,840	3,070	-0.7	-8.1
Leisure & Hospitality	3,460	3,260	3,420	6.1	1.2
Other Services	1,240	1,290	1,200	-3.9	3.3
Government Education	5,350	3,720	5,150	43.8	3.9
Government Administration	4,340	4,160	3,670	4.3	18.3

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

jobs. *Professional and Business Services* gained 350 jobs over the year, mostly because of increased call center and harvest activity. The number of *Manufacturing* jobs remained below last year's level as AMI Semiconductor reduced and continues to adjust staff, and Ballard-Kimberly Clark eliminated jobs through attrition. If companies that have announced job growth continue to add jobs through the end of the year, the area should experience a net gain of jobs in 2003 over 2002.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Please note: Information contained in *Area Developments* is obtained from area newspapers, local Job Service offices, trade publications, local area Chambers of Commerce publications, and other sources.

Bannock County

- Qwest Communications International Inc. announced plans to increase its Pocatello workforce by 102 workers by March 2004. In a press conference in September, Qwest president for Idaho, Jim Schmit, credited Pocatello's excellent workforce and Idaho's business-friendly climate for the decision to bring these jobs to Pocatello. Governor Dirk Kempthorne attended the press conference and lauded Qwest Communications as one of Idaho's premier employers. The local Qwest office competed with offices in several states and cities for the expansion. After the 102 new workers are added, Qwest will employ 268 people in Pocatello with individual salaries between \$22,000 and \$40,000 per year.
- Idaho State University (ISU) announced the expansion of its Idaho Accelerator Center. The \$1.8 million expansion is the result of a partnership between public entities and private business. The expansion includes two additional accelerator labs and support facilities. Completion of the expansion is expected in the spring of 2004 and should add 20 to 30 jobs. Governor Dirk Kempthorne, who attended a ceremony at ISU in early October, praised the partnerships of government, education, and private industry in making positive things happen in Pocatello. ISU, the City of Pocatello, and private industry have combined resources to bring this expansion to the university and the city.
- Quiznos Sandwich Shop opened September 30 on the corner of South Fifth Avenue and Center Street in Pocatello. The new business employs approximately 25 people.

Bingham County

- Gerald and Carrye Wilmot opened an auto repair shop, G&C Auto, at 500 West Highway 26 in Blackfoot. The couple operates the business together and offers everything from tune-ups to engine exchanges. Gerald Wilmot is a certified Master Automotive Technician and has many years of experience. Carrye is a certified bookkeeper.
- Blackfoot's 20th Century Ford-Dodge is undergoing a major upgrade. The two-phase project will include improving both the interior and exterior of the business, changing the businesses entrance, and remodeling the sales offices. The upgrade will improve the appearance and functionality of the business.

Caribou County

- Approximately \$130,000 in improvements is underway at Caribou Memorial Hospital in Soda Springs. The registration and human resource areas are being upgraded to increase privacy and efficiency. The space vacated by human resources will be used to expand the existing health information services divi-

sion. The project also includes new flooring and wall covering. Funding for the \$130,000 improvement came from federal "upper payment limit" funds through the Idaho Hospital Association.

- Agrium Inc. of Soda Springs announced the reduction of approximately 45 jobs at its Astaris Purified Phosphorus Acid (PPA) plant. The PPA facility, a joint venture of Agrium Inc. and Astaris LLC, opened in 2001. The facility is operated by Agrium and supplied PPA to the company's plant in Green River, Wyoming, and was to supply PPA to replace elemental phosphorus at the Astaris facility in Pocatello. Astaris' Pocatello facility closed in December 2002; the Green River facility will also close.

Franklin County

- Gordon's Steak House opened at 101 North State in Preston. The restaurant, owned by Gordon Brewster and Mundo Velpeuda, is open seven days a week and employs 15 workers. According to Brewster, work began in June 2003 to renovate and bring the building into the 21st century. After a successful renovation, the restaurant opened September 1. The restaurant is the second restaurant operated by the partners.

Oneida County

- Anderson Feed held a grand opening celebration at its new store in Malad. Owners Shawn and Brenda Anderson have operated the business in Samaria for the past four years. The business is located at 35 West 90 South in Malad, and carries a full line of Intermountain Farmer and Nutrena products as well as other feed and tack.

Power County

- The old county hospital and American Legion building at 500 Pocatello Avenue in American Falls is being remodeled and upgraded to house the new American Falls Youth Center and county museum. Upgrades to the electrical wiring and ventilation in the building's basement, which will house the youth center, is complete. Remodeling has progressed to the point of painting and installation of floor coverings. The new youth center will include a snack bar area, computer and study area, pool tables, a ping-pong table, outdoor basketball hoops, and other accessories. The center remodel and operation is funded through a partnership of government, religious organizations, and private business. Completion is expected by early 2004.

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